CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A connector that electrically connects an optoelectronic transceiver module configured for bi-directional communication and a communications device configured for unidirectional communication, the connector comprising:

a first plurality of pads that are used to communicate with a first receiver and a first transmitter of the optoelectronic transceiver module;

a second plurality of pads used to communicate with the communications device; and

a third plurality of pads selectively operable to communicate with a second receiver and a second transmitter when used to connect the optoelectronic transceiver module to a communications device that is configured for bi-directional communication.

2. The connector of claim 1, wherein said communications device is configured to receive standard form factor pluggable (SFP) modules.

3. The connector of claim 2, wherein said second plurality of pads conforms to the SFP standard.

4. The connector of claim 1, wherein said communication device is configured to receive a 10 Gigabit standard form factor pluggable (XFP) module.

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5. The connector of claim 1, wherein at least two of said first plurality of pads communicate with said first transmitter of said optoelectronic transceiver.

6. The connector of claim 5, wherein at least two of said first plurality of pads communicate with said first receiver of said optoelectronic transceiver.

7. The connector of claim 1, wherein at least two of said third plurality of pads communicate with said second transmitter of said optoelectronic transceiver.

8. The connector of claim 7, wherein at least two of said third plurality of pads communicate with said second receiver of said optoelectronic transceiver.

9. The connector of claim 1, wherein a sum of the first plurality, the second plurality and the third plurality equals twenty.

10. The connector of claim 1, wherein a sum of the first plurality, the second plurality and the third plurality equals thirty.

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11. A connector that electrically connects an optical transceiver module configured for unidirectional communication and a communications device configured for bi-directional communication, the connector comprising:

a first plurality of pads that are used to communicate with a receiver and a transmitter of the optical transceiver module;

a second plurality of pads used to communicate with the communications device; and

a third plurality of pads that are idle but that can be used to communicate with a second receiver and a second transmitter when used to connect an optical transceiver module configured for bi-directional communication to the communications device.

12. The connector of claim 11, wherein said transceiver module is selected from the group consisting of a standard form factor pluggable (SFP) module or a 10 Gigabit standard form factor pluggable (XFP) module.

13. The connector of claim 12, wherein said first plurality of pads conforms to the SFP standard.

14. The connector of claim 11, wherein at least two of said third plurality of pads communicate with a second transmitter of an optoelectronic transceiver configured for bi-directional communication.

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15. The connector of claim 14, wherein at least two of said third plurality of pads communicate with a second receiver of an optoelectronic transceiver configured for bi-directional communication.

16. The connector of claim 11, wherein a sum of the first plurality, the second plurality and the third plurality equals twenty.

17. The connector of claim 11, wherein a sum of the first plurality, the second plurality and the third plurality equals thirty.

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18. An optoelectronic transceiver assembly providing backwards compatibility between a bi-directional component and a legacy unidirectional component, comprising:

an optical transceiver module;

a communications device that communicates electrically with the optical transceiver module, wherein one of the optical transceiver module and the communications device is configured for bi-directional communication and the other of the optical transceiver module and the communications device is configured only for unidirectional communication; and

a connector that electrically connects the optical transceiver module and the communications device, wherein the connector includes:

a first set of pads that are used to communicate with a first receiver and a first transmitter of the optical transceiver module; and

a second set of pads that are idle but can be used to communicate with a second receiver and a second transmitter when used to connect an optical transceiver module and a communications device that are both configured for bi-directional communication.

19. The optoelectronic transceiver assembly of claim 18, wherein said communications device is configured to receive a module selected from the group consisting of a standard form factor pluggable (SFP) module or a 10 Gigabit standard form factor pluggable (XFP) module.

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20. The optoelectronic transceiver assembly of claim 19, wherein said transceiver module is one of a standard form factor pluggable (SFP) module, and a bi-directional transceiver module.

21. The optoelectronic transceiver assembly of claim 18, wherein said first set of pads conforms to the SFP standard.

22. The optoelectronic transceiver assembly of claim 18, wherein at least two of said second set of pads communicate with a second transmitter of an optoelectronic transceiver configured for bi-directional communication.

23. The optoelectronic transceiver assembly of claim 22, wherein at least two of said second set of pads communicate with a second receiver of an optoelectronic transceiver configured for bi-directional communication.

24. The optoelectronic transceiver assembly of claim 18, wherein a sum of the first set, and the second set equals twenty.

25. The optoelectronic transceiver assembly of claim 18, wherein a sum of the first set, and the second set equals thirty.

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